

WEBINAR INTRODUCTION TO RACE TO THE TOP

PRESENTED BY
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December 7, 2009

Questions during the live Webinar?

- Please write down your questions during the live presentation. At the conclusion, there will be question and answer period.
- You will be able to submit your questions in the chat box that will appear.
- Questions we cannot get to will be answered in a FAQ or during a future Webinar.

Goals of the Race to the Top Webinar

- Introduce the Race to the Top (RTTT) Grant and how it complements other efforts underway from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) and how it supports Iowa's education reform efforts
- Share USED's grant award timeline and the timeline and process for completing lowa's application

Goals of the Race to the Top Webinar

- Explain how applications will be scored
- Share what districts will have to do to participate in lowa's grant
- Share how additional information can be accessed and questions answered

About Race to the Top

Race to the Top is a major component of the U.S. Department of Education's stimulus package.

With a \$4.35 billion appropriation, Race to the Top Fund is the largest ever federal competitive investment in school reform.

It will reward states for past accomplishments and create incentives for future improvements.

Race to the Top's Overarching Goals

- Driving substantial gains in student achievement
- Improving high school graduation and college enrollment
- Narrowing achievement gaps

States have been challenged through Race to the Top to create comprehensive strategies for addressing the four central areas of reform that will drive school improvement:

1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;

 Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;

 Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and

4. Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

The Race to the Top Competition

- Significant work goes into preparing a strong application for the highly competitive grant.
- Highly competitive process and only a few states are expected to receive funding in Phase I.
- States must submit a nearly 400-page proposal by January 19, 2010.
- States not awarded in Phase 1 will receive feedback and can re-apply in Phase 2.

Important Race to the Top Dates

- Phase 1 Applications Due: January 19, 2010
- Phase 1 Awards Announced: April 2010
- Phase 2 Applications Due: June 1, 2010
- Phase 2 Awards Announced: September 2010

- Race to the Top potentially offers millions of new dollars to support improvements and innovations in Iowa's education system over the next four years
 - Awards will be made based on a budget that matches the work in a state's grant application
 - The suggested range for lowa's grant is \$60-\$175 million

- The program could support deeper implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum and help local school districts move forward in major reform areas.
- Iowa is well positioned to compete, thus to reap the benefits of its past accomplishments and advance future reforms.

- Iowa schools and the state both could directly receive funds
 - Half of the funds awarded will go directly to local school districts that voluntarily decide to take part
 - Half of the funds will help the Iowa Department of Education build the infrastructure to support statewide implementation

- It is very clear that criteria in Race to the Top will be consistent across other new programs within the U.S. Department of Education.
- The same priorities also will guide their efforts in reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

 The feedback Iowa will receive on our application will be valuable to how we demonstrate the connections between lowa's priorities and national priorities, thus protecting Iowa's approach to reform.

- There are two eligibility requirements
 - Approved for State Fiscal Stabilization prior to the award (lowa's application is due January 11, 2010)
 - There can be no legal barriers at state level to linking student achievement data to teachers principals for the purposes of evaluation (lowa does not have such legal barriers)

- The Iowa Core Curriculum
 - Bold vision adopted by the State Board of Education in 2007 and 2008. Many processes and goals for developing the lowa Core Curriculum parallel those currently being used in the development of the Common Core Standards Initiative.

- Longitudinal data systems
 - Since 2004, Iowa has had a unique student identifier and requirements for districts to send data electronically to enhance data collection.
 - In 2008, the Iowa Department of Education began developing the data warehouse, connecting education data from Pk-12 to higher education.

- Teacher and Administrator Quality
 - Standards have been developed for teachers and administrators and are the foundation for our evaluation process
 - Every five years, evaluators must receive a license demonstrating competency to evaluate educators on the standards

- Teacher and Administrator Quality
 - Once they receive a standard license, teachers and administrators are required to complete <u>annual</u> professional growth plans and are evaluated every three years
 - lowa was recognized as one of the top three states in the Rand evaluation for leadership development and support

- Teacher and Administrator Quality
 - Iowa has alternative teacher and principal preparation program and has revamped preparation programs
 - lowa's research-based professional development model must be incorporated and implemented in districts' comprehensive improvement plans

Race to the Top Application Requirements

- Signature of key stakeholders
- Certification from State's Attorney General
- State Reform Condition Requirements
- Reform Plan Requirements

Demonstrating Local Commitment

- Districts must agree to take part in all or a significant portion of a state's Race to the Top plan in order for school districts to receive funds
- Participation is voluntary
- Districts indicate agreement to participate by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state

Demonstrating Local Commitment

- Having signed MOUs is the main mechanism for demonstrating district commitment to a state's application.
- The strongest applications will have signatures on the MOUs from district superintendents, school board presidents, and teacher's union presidents.

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Race to the Top Application Priorities

- Absolute: Comprehensive approach to education reform
 - Address all of the four education reform areas in a coherent manner
 - Garner commitment from enough districts to implement and achieve the goals and plans
- Competitive: Emphasis on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math)

Invitational Application Priorities

- Innovations for improving early learning outcomes
- Expansion and adoption of statewide longitudinal data systems
- P-20 coordination, vertical and horizontal alignment
- School-level conditions for reform, innovation, and learning

Race to the Top Selection Criteria

- The Race to the Top application is built on accumulating points for meeting important criteria
- Every point will matter in this highly competitive process

Selection Criteria

- State Success Factors—125 points
- Standards and Assessments—70 points
- Data Systems to Support Instruction—47 points
- Great Teachers and Leaders—138 points
- Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools—
 50 points
- General—55 points
- Emphasis on STEM—15 points

Selection Criteria Details: State Success Factors

- 1. Articulating Iowa's education reform agenda and school districts' participation in it
- Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up, and sustain proposed plans
- 3. Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps

Selection Criteria Details: Standards and Assessments

- 1. Developing and adopting common standards
- 2. Developing and implementing common, highquality assessments
- 3. Supporting transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments

Selection Criteria Details: Data Systems to Support Instruction

- Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system
- 2. Accessing and using state data
- 3. Using data to improve instruction

Selection Criteria Details: Great Teachers and Leaders

- Providing alternative pathways for aspiring teachers and principals
- 2. Differentiating teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance
- 3. Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals

(continued)

Selection Criteria Details: Great Teachers and Leaders

- 4. Reporting the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs
- 5. Providing effective support to teachers and principals

Selection Criteria Details: Turning Around Struggling Schools

- 1. Intervening in the lowest-performing schools and LEAs
- 2. Increasing the supply of high-quality charter schools
- 3. Intervening in and supporting struggling schools

Selection Criteria Details: *General*

- 1. Making education funding a priority
- Not having a cap on the number of highperforming charter schools and other innovative schools
- 3. Demonstrating other significant reform conditions

Selection Criteria Details: Emphasis on STEM

- Offering a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering
- 2. Cooperating with industry, museums, universities, research centers, etc.
- Preparing more students for advanced study and STEM careers

Iowa's Developing Vision for Approaching Race to the Top

 Enhance local implementation of the Iowa Core

State Board of Education Vision

"lowa students will become productive citizens in a democratic society, and successful participants in a global community."

Iowa's Developing Vision for Approaching Race to the Top

- Develop tools and capacity to create engaging and robust learning environments
- Deepen lowa's programming in the four areas of reform prioritized within Race to the Top

Iowa's Race to the Top Application Process

- Many stakeholders coming together on advisory and work groups
- Online surveys will be offered to gather questions
- Statewide webinars and regional meetings

- A representative Advisory Group guides the process
 - Purposes: To frame Iowa's vision for the Race to the Top and to ensure the vision and Iowa's strengths are woven throughout the application
 - Includes, among others, representatives of the lowa Association of School Boards, the Iowa State Education Association, the School Administrators of Iowa, the State Legislature, the Governor's Office

- Convening Work Groups for each section
 - * State Success Factors
- * Great Teachers & Leaders
- * Standards/Assessments * Low Performing Schools
- * Data Systems

- * STEM
- Each Work Group includes representatives from the field and staff from the Iowa Department of Education
- Each recommends specific plans for its specific area

- West Wind Education Policy is facilitating the Work Groups and drafting the application
 - West Wind is a national consulting firm based in lowa City (<u>www.westwinded.com</u>)
- Stakeholders are invited to learn about the program and ask questions via our website at www.iowa.gov/educate/.

- As soon as requirements are determined for districts, they will be advised how to sign onto the Race to the Top application
- Information will be provided no later than January 4
- Districts must return MOUs no later than January 14
- Superintendents, school boards, and teachers unions can follow developments in the mean time by signing up for email updates

 Though Iowa is well positioned to obtain points in many sections of the application, the Iowa Department of Education has identified three key actions that would support Iowa's Race to the Top application, allow school districts to apply for additional federal funds that will be released in the coming months, and contribute to education innovation.

Key Area 1

Removing the cap and repeal date for charter schools in Iowa. Currently, Iowa Code has capped the number of charter schools it can approve at 20 and has a sunset clause for all charter schools of July 1, 2011. The application would be stronger if these restrictions were removed.

Key Area 2

Measures of student performance and growth should be used in the teacher and principal evaluation process. We are discussing with multiple stakeholders what this should look like.

Key Area 3

Turning around Iowa's lowest performing schools. Race to the Top and forthcoming School Improvement Funds will focus on turning around the country's lowest performing schools. Each state must have a policy that allows a method for improving these schools.

- December 7 and 8: Statewide webinars
- Weeks of December 7, 14, 21: Convene representatives in the Advisory Group and a Work Group for each selection criterion
- Week of December 28: First draft application completed
- Week of January 4: Webinars and regional meetings

- January 14: MOUs submitted
 - To be eligible to receive funding through the 50% of the Race to the Top funds that go directly to districts, MOUs must be submitted by 4:30 p.m.
 - Districts failing to sign a MOU also may not be eligible to receive funds under the 50% set-aside for the state's activities. (We anticipate the state will have some development projects that will only engage smaller numbers of districts.)

 NOTE: If Iowa's grant is successful, districts will have up to 90 days after the award is made to develop final scope of work documents, which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with the preliminary scope of work.

- Early January: State Board Approves Application
- January 14: Advisory Group final recommendation
- January 14-15: Iowa Department of Education Director, Attorney General, Governor approve final application
- January 16: Application submitted

Future Webinars

 We are planning for two Webinars next week to go over the details of specific application criteria. The dates and times will be announced later this week.

Questions

- Please submit questions now. I will be back on in five minutes.
- We will compile responses to the most frequently asked questions and post them on our website. Please visit our website to view the answers and for updates on the application process:

www.iowa.gov/educate/.